

Central Intelligence Agency



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Beijing's Indochina Policy

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China's long-term strategy for forcing the Vietnamese out of Cambodia remains based on the three pillars established soon after Vietnam's 1978 invasion:

- Military pressure along Vietnam's northern frontier, designed to keep most of the Vietnamese Army deployed in the North and unavailable for duty in Cambodia.
- Military assistance to the Cambodian resistance, principally through the Communist Khmer Rouge.
- Chinese backing for ASEAN's diplomatic and economic measures, and reassurance of Bangkok and others that China does not seek a return to power of the Khmer Rouge or Pol Pot.

Beijing shows no signs of ending its military pressure against Vietnam's northern border.

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- The latest fighting was probably initiated to mark the seventh anniversary of the capture of Phnom Penh by Vietnamese troops. Hanoi boasted of killing more than 2,000 Chinese troops, and Beijing claimed 400 Vietnamese casualties.

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China continues to be the main supporter for all three Cambodian resistance factions. The assistance provided includes training in China for resistance forces, Chinese military advisers operating with resistance forces in Cambodia, and large amounts of a variety of infantry weapons:

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- Since 1979, Beijing has provided [] almost \$3 million for the two main non-Communist Cambodian resistance groups, the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) and the Sihanoukist National Army (ANS). 25X1
- This aid has been provided at irregular intervals, usually timed in part to achieve political objectives, such as emphasizing the need for unity with the Communist Khmer Rouge resistance forces.
- China allocates an estimated \$25 million per year for the Khmer Rouge. [] This aid is provided on a regular basis, allowing the Khmer Rouge to avoid critical spot shortages that have long plagued non-Communist efforts. 25X1 25X1

Beijing has taken initiatives in the past year to blunt Hanoi's diplomatic initiatives, convince ASEAN and others that China does not seek a return to power of the Khmer Rouge or Pol Pot, and to demonstrate flexibility on the potential composition of a Cambodian Government following a Vietnamese withdrawal:

- China's influence has been crucial, in our view, in moderating Khmer Rouge excesses in the field and in increasing Khmer Rouge willingness to cooperate with non-Communist units inside Cambodia.
- Beijing probably took a leading role in formulating the resistance coalition's eight-point proposal announced in Beijing last March, which for the first time allowed for the inclusion of Vietnam's puppet Heng Samrin faction in a coalition government.

China remains committed to its strategy in Cambodia even if diplomatic measures prove unproductive in moving toward a settlement. The continuing stalemate in Cambodia, particularly at the relatively low costs involved at present, is likely to remain an attractive option for Beijing because of the pain it inflicts on Hanoi.

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